



City of LaVerkin

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Confluence Park Executive Board and Technical Advisory Committee Minutes Wednesday, January 21, 2015 4:00 p.m. 435 N. Main, LaVerkin, Utah

Present:

Board Members:

Bob Sandberg
Darren Cottam
Kerry Gubler

Washington County – HCP
Toquerville City
La Verkin City

Others:

Trail Kreitzer
Rachel DeBoer
Ken Hooten
Kathleen Nielson
Steve Meismer
Christy Ballard
Cory Martin
Casey Lofthouse
Alisha Terry Martin

UDWR
Hurricane Trails Committee
La Verkin City Council
Grant Writer
VRP
La Verkin City

I. **Meeting Called to Order:** Kerry Gubler called the meeting to order at 4:08pm.

II. **Approve Minutes:**

Motion was made by Bob Sandberg to approve the November 19, 2014 minutes as amended, second by Darren Cottam. Motion carried unanimously.

III. **Business:**

A. Follow up report on the 501c3 proposal-Casey Lofthouse/ Cory Martin

Casey would like to start brainstorming with the Committee ideas for what is going to work. They would also like to start formulating the plan to start an MOU that addresses everyone's concerns.

Alisha Terry Martin passed out a handout of her presentation. She mentioned they are all long-term residents of the Hurricane Valley and have recreated in Confluence Park. They came across the 2007 Master Plan for the Park and thought they could do something with it. They have the resources and enough people willing to help. They are forming the 501c3 right now and have a 5-member board with quite a few people who are interested and willing to help with starting an implementation plan in getting the 2007 Plan off the ground. They have read and love the Plan and the conservation documents. There are a lot of grants they can apply for that the County cannot and that is what they want to help with.

They do not want to change the Master Plan.

They would like to formulate a long term MOU. A 99 year agreement because they don't want to put in all of their time, effort, resources and money if they are only allowed to do a one or two year project. They want to do this long term, just like the plan states.

It was asked what they thought they could do to make it happen?

Casey mentioned there are several different programs that have funding available to non-profit organizations not available to government agencies.

They do want input from this Committee.

There are a couple of different places that are very successful and run in the type of fashion they are proposing. Wheeler Farms, in Northern Utah and Thanksgiving Point. The Museum of Natural Curiosity that Thanksgiving Point just opened was financed and funds were raised by the non-profit organization.

He feels with the communities, County, municipalities, and the 501c3, the Confluence Park Master Plan can move forward. There are highly qualified community members interested in helping make this successful.

It is important that they have the Confluence Park Board's support and move forward with the same ideas.

One of the ideas they would like to do, as a fundraising effort, is have a video type presentation they are able to take to different corporations, businesses, and potential donors that encompasses this plan.

Funding is going to be the deciding factor on how long it takes to get the plan moving forward. He would hate to get five years in and have some things be a success but not meet higher expectations and lose everything.

Kathleen talked about her experience with being on the Santa Clara River Reserve Board and feels that what Casey and Corey are bringing to this Board is a phenomenal opportunity to help the Plan move forward. The fact they want a long-term lease means they will bring people in to help with the efforts.

The successful groups are the ones that come from the bottom up, community members who want to see projects move forward.

Bob questioned if the 501c3 or the MOU needs to come first.

Alisha mentioned her attorney is already drafting documents, which can be changed, for the MOU. A 501c3 is a lot of money so the MOU will need to be in place first.

Casey mentioned he doesn't want anyone to feel that they are trying to come in and take over Confluence Park and they don't want to violate anything in the conservancy easement. That is why it is critical to have a good working relationship with everyone involved especially while writing the MOU. The MOU needs to encompass all of the concerns. It should also have the ability to be adjusted as things change or if there are roles in the day-to-day operations or long-term management that could be turned over to the 501c3 or vice versa. Wheeler Farms for instance, is primarily funded by a 501c3 but has a County Park Manager who is the CEO and oversees the operations, in cooperation with the 501c3.

Bob stated nothing can be done contrary to the conservation easement. He feels it is really going to come down to figuring out how to combine the two groups.

Once the MOU draft has been completed it could be presented to this group and then depending on how they feel about it, take it to the County, or start with the County and then on to this group.

Casey would like to come to this Board first and then after receiving their recommendation go to the County.

Bob mentioned the MOU would need to go to DWR for their review as well.

Kathleen said Casey and Alisha talked about being in charge of the management of the Park and wondered if they saw that as their role.

Casey pointed out that right now someone takes care of making reservations for camping, if Park visitation increases, someone will need to take the lead on handling those reservations. It is something he feels needs to be written into the MOU.

Alisha feels that management includes a bunch of different things. Thanksgiving Point for instance, probably has a bigger entity that oversees the Board that takes care of Thanksgiving Point. She wants to be the driver of the planting, the water, the educational experiences, of the things that happen at the Park. So yes, it does include management but it does not exclude the entities that are already in place.

Casey pointed out that this Board will have the final say, along with the County Commission and Fish and Wildlife.

Bob said this Board is the recommending body and Interlocal Committee that operates the Park and will need to be the body that remains in charge. The 501c3 will work under that and as long as everything that is put together in the MOU fits, then the 501c3 can do what is identified in the MOU coordinating with this group and the Commission, if it needs to get to that level.

Darren feels this would be a good thing in moving the Plan forward. The Confluence Park Board/Committee has done some great things but he feels the proposed body will be able to do more.

Alisha mentioned she has envisioned coming to this group at the beginning of their fiscal year with the budget and priority projects for the year to get approval and then move forward with those projects. They would love to get water to the Park and get the fields planted this year.

The hope is that they can get documents to the Board this month to start working through things.

Mayor Gubler doesn't think a 99 year agreement is a good idea. There needs to be a feasible period determined, for the Board and for the presenters, as an initial agreement. He also feels we need to find out if the County is even okay with the idea.

He would like them to come back next month with a feasible time frame for the initial agreement.

He would like Bob to find out if the County is alright with what is being presented.

He mentioned he feels this is a very feasible thing but it needs to work for the County and for the 501c3 in order to be successful.

There also needs to be more presented, possibly a five or seven year plan with steps outlined in how that plan will be implemented.

Trail asked if Casey and Cory have access to, and have read, the conservation easement documents.

They replied that they have.

Casey also mentioned there are other County owned properties that are run by a non-profit; Wells Fargo in Leeds, Grafton schoolhouse and Fort Harmony. We can look at their MOU's to get ideas.

He appreciates the feedback from this Board. He believes the input from this Board is critical in having a relationship that works.

Mayor Gubler stated the impression he has is that this Board is in support of the idea but needs specific steps. This item will be on next month's agenda with a 15-minute slot.

Steve suggested having a draft of what they are planning, to hand out to Fish and Wildlife and DWR so any potential issues can be addressed.

B. Access Points Grant-Kathleen Nielson

They have been meeting with Hurricane this past week and there are some changes with the kiosk and restroom. Hurricane wanted to combine the restroom and kiosk into one building. It is going to be a simple design with one restroom in the front, a maintenance room and then the back of the building will be open for the kiosk. The information panels will be on the solid wall with an overhang on the west side so they will never be in the sun. Hurricane will try to have an overhang on both ends. If they are able to do that, they would like to take the map and instead of mounting it on the wall, they want to put it on supports so people can be looking at the map and Confluence Park.

The exterior will be split face block instead of rock due to cost.

There is just a small amount of money left in the grant so we need a commitment from La Verkin and Toquerville to help with either money or in-kind for the SR 9 and Center Street Trailheads.

Kathleen is going to the State Trail Coordinator and the Grant Committee to see if we can get a little more money since we were shorted on this grant. If we get to the point of working on the trails there will be plenty of in-kind but not enough cash. Perhaps they will let us do the trails from one of the Trailheads during a different project.

Bob said the County has committed to some of the hauling and grading for Center Street and the Virgin River Trailhead(SR9). Hurricane will take care of everything on their

side. We still need to come up with material for the trails. Kyle Gubler contacted Interstate Rock, who got the bid for SR9 but was unable to get a commitment from them for material. That is why we are going to need money. We will need to buy material for the trails.

Bob wondered if La Verkin could help with the trails, installing the register boxes, help with grading, acquiring and/or placement of barriers for the Virgin River Trailhead (SR9) to keep people off the surrounding property.

Darren said that Toquerville is willing to help with money or in-kind.

Bob reported the maps and signage still need to be purchased with the just under \$10,000 left in the grant and we need material for the trails. If we can't find someone to donate the material we will need to purchase it. We will also need equipment to get the material to the trails.

The County will be shaping the trails to handle the drainage. Arthur LeBaron from Hurricane has agreed to help survey the areas.

C. Irrigation Water acquisition-Bob Sandberg

The County has given Bob some money and he has tried to contact John Bennett from the Governor's Office to see if there is any grant money to help with acquiring water.

The first step in Bob's plan is to acquire the water and then worry about getting the pipe in the ground.

The middle field would be easy to water if there was any water available from Ash Creek.

Mayor Gubler stated that some of the fields were watered from Ash Creek, and some by the La Verkin Creek.

Bob said Kyle Gubler has a list of people willing to sell their water shares, from La Verkin Creek, but Bob has not contacted any of them.

Darren will mention this to Toquerville's Mayor, who is working with Ron from the Water Conservancy District and maybe they can get something worked out for the Park.

Bob wondered if once the Ash Creek Reservoir was complete if there would be any water that could be used.

Steve will look into that.

D. Tree pruning and dedicated hunter project-Bob Sandberg

The County staff pruned the trees along the La Verkin City Trailhead.

Trail reported there is usually a rush after the draw with people needing to fulfill their hours.

Bob has gotten a project approved to cut Tamarisk and Russian Olive sprouts. A past project has been putting wire around the trees to keep the beaver from eating them and there is some more of that work that could be done.

Bob passed out the restroom maintenance schedule for 2015.

Steve asked how the tree planting in November went.

Bob reported there were about 20 volunteers that planted about 50 trees, most of them were in the parking lot area.

The trees are looking very well.

IV. Public Concerns for Board Consideration:

Rachel DeBoer from the Hurricane Trails Committee reported in December their group repaired some of the trails that had been damaged by water. They also cleaned up garbage from the old dumpsite. Two truckloads were hauled out and there are still two large piles waiting for removal. Hurricane City told them once the garbage is removed they will get road base to place on the trail to help cover the glass.

V. Board members concerns:

Darren reported Toquerville has recently formed a Trails Committee to start working on a Master Trails Plan. They are looking at ways they can tie into Confluence Park. Bob Litchfield has given the City property for a bypass road so that may be an access point and could possibly have a trailhead. UDOT has slated to start the process of widening SR17 in 2018. Toquerville would like to bypass SR17 instead of widening it. There are a couple of possibilities for a trailhead into Confluence from Toquerville.

Bob reported the County has been approached to give the Cromes and Potters access right of way through a little corner of Confluence Park. The road comes off Litchfield's property onto a dirt road that goes to the Cromes and Potters property. Bob has looked at aerial photos from 1977 and the road is there. He doesn't know if the conservation easement will have a problem but the property has been accessed from that road since at least 1977. DWR is looking over the paperwork now.

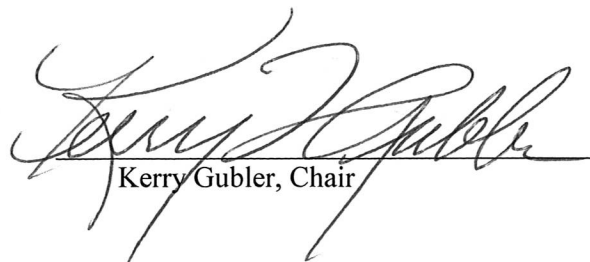
The easement states the County will not issue right of ways across the property but the road was there before the County purchased the property and placed the easement over it.

VI. Adjourn:

Motion was made by Darren Cottam to adjourn, second by Bob Sandberg. Motion carried at 5:16pm.

Minutes taken by Christy Ballard.

February 18, 2015
Date Approved


Kerry Gubler, Chair